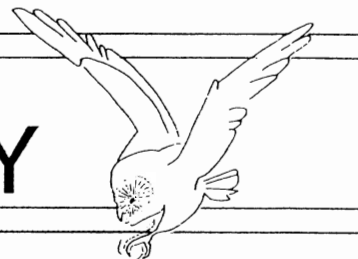


# NATURALLY KENTUCKY



Number 6, December 1992

## "Congratulations, Mr. Hannan ..."

By Richard Hannan



Richard Hannan and Marc Evans-New Acting Director KSNPC

"..you can start work next month." My bags are packed and I'm ready to go. The farm is sold. My wife and two children are in Georgia waiting for school to start. There is no turning back now. The truck starts, I'm off. As the miles to my new home in Atlanta click by on the odometer, my thoughts whirl madly across 14 years of being a member of the Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission. Brief but vivid pictures flash across a screen somewhere in my brain, smiles punctuated by tears wash over my face. Fourteen years seems so long, yet, oh so short.

I recall that it seems like only yesterday that Don Harker told me that I could start my job with the Commission in late August. The year was 1978. He said that I had a one-year appointment but that he would try to keep me on if additional grant money was secured. My wife, Neesia, did not believe I was actually going to start work because over four months had passed since I had

applied for the job. That one-year appointment magically passed the 14 year mark on August 26th of this year.

It is ironic that the collage of pictures comprising my memory of the past 14 years is dominated by the faces of people instead of places. The scenes of the Kentucky landscape that I worked to protect are memorable but they are not as prominent as the people I met along the way. I do vividly remember my first trip into the wilds of Kentucky with Rick Phillippe which included visits to Charley Cheeks Swamp in Laurel County and Bad Branch in Letcher County. I remember being awed by the beauty of both places. I can still feel the sense of discovery that surged within me when Rick and I found Fraser's sedge along the crystal clear waters of Bad Branch. The plant hadn't been collected in Kentucky since the 1940's. The Commission's heritage data base also remembers; in fact, it unemotionally spits out data indicating that Rick and I travelled across the state in our quest to locate natural areas. The computer printout indicates that I have been to places that even I can't remember visiting. They say that the mind is the first thing to go.

The majority of my clearest images are of people, people I shall never forget. My mental album is filled with the incidents, discoveries, and adventures that I shared with my cohorts at the Commission over the many years. I decided to leave all of you unnamed lest I forget anyone. You know who you are and I trust you do not mind me stealing away with my memories.

(CONTINUED INSIDE)

I remember sitting with Charley Cheek, owner of the statuesque bottomland hardwoods swamp along the Laurel River, and Ira Burton and his wife, guardians of Bad Branch gorge, and learning from them about the Kentucky that has been forever lost. I was stricken by their astute observations and rich stories as we sat surrounded by their humble means. I remember the day I approached G.B. Wood, a master knife maker from Clay County, to ask his permission to visit the forest behind his house. After introducing myself he laid down a verbal gauntlet chastising me and the State of Kentucky for wasting the taxpayers money trying to identify and protect natural areas in eastern Kentucky. As I tried desperately to grasp some degree of composure, he smiled and said that he was just testing my "mettle". Placing a hand on my shoulder, he sat me down on his porch, and proceeded to exclaim that he wished I had been there to protect the towering mesophytic forests before they were cut in the 1940's. Hours spent with Harry and Larry Stafford talking about Metropolis Lake, farming, hunting, and life further add to the tapestry woven over the last 14 years.

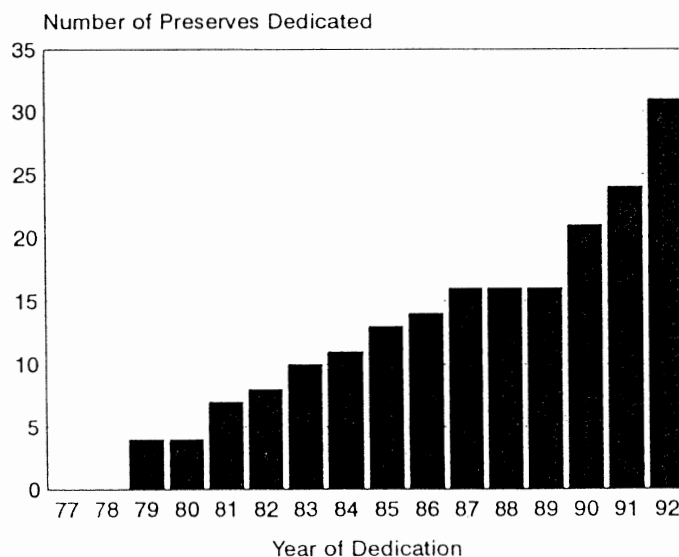
Remembering the time I came across a working moonshine still can quicken my pace. Having a rifle jammed in my face, suspicious gun shots in my direction, and killing stares punctuate my catalog of memories. That early morning telephone call telling me of Susie's murder is a haunting memory I wish I could forget, but never will.

The old people with their wrinkled faces and friendly smiles will forever keep me warm. I've sat on porches listening to their stories from Pike County to Fulton County and untold points between. Those tales of towering forests and foreboding swamps kept my hopes alive that someday we would find the forest that the chainsaw had forgot or a prairie unplowed. The old timers sometimes had to wipe away tears as they cursed the ravages that forever have scarred their hills. They are the only ones that really know how much we have lost.

Throughout this unravelling tale, the one thought that ties all of these memories together is pride. I have always been very proud of being a part of the Commission and its effort to protect the beauty and biological inheritance of Kentucky. I am proud of the reports we have written, the lands we have protected and the caring stewardship that we have initiated on those lands. Words cannot capture the feelings I have concerning the dedication of the people that have worked for the protection of Kentucky's natural heritage, Commission staff, Commission members, and my friends with The Kentucky Chapter of the Nature Conservancy and the other conservation groups within the state. I am proud to have worked with you. Finally, without the constant support of Neesia, these past 14 years would not have been possible. It has been my pleasure and honor to have had the opportunity to work for the people of Kentucky.

As I pull into the driveway of my new home in Georgia, I am amazed at how quick the trip was. I guess when you're with friends, time slips away much too quickly. All those memories, the people, the places, the years; it just seems like yesterday ...

## THE GROWTH OF THE NATURE PRESERVES SYSTEM



The Commission now monitors 246 animal species and 338 vascular plant species that have been identified as endangered, threatened, or of special concern at the state or federal level. To date, 30 nature preserves encompassing approximately 8,736 acres are being protected in perpetuity.

---

## VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION

By Cindy Campbell

The Stewardship program has literally buzzed with activity this summer, thanks to a committed group of volunteers and the addition of two five-month preserve management workers. In August we welcomed University of Kentucky students, Cynthia Riedel and Chris Smigell to the Commission. Cynthia and Chris will be performing preserve maintenance tasks at many of the preserves during the coming months. If while visiting a preserve, you stumble upon two busy individuals resembling aliens in their chainsaw chaps and elaborate orange headgear, say hello to our newest staff members! They're harmless.

On July 18 a diligent search and destroy crew consisting of Bob and Ruth Matheny, Chris Smigell and Judy Sutter handpulled wheelbarrow loads of Daucus carota (Queen Anne's lace) and Melilotus alba (white sweetclover) at Blue Licks State Park Nature Preserve in Robertson County. Thanks to their efforts we will see fewer stems of these exotics next year. Additionally they cleared woody vegetation that was encroaching upon the glade area and shading the federally endangered Short's goldenrod.

The new Stewardship exhibit went to the State Fair with staff members Kris Snyder and Cindy Campbell, on August 29. Donald Taylor, Jr., Glenna Wood, David Hulefeld, Rachael Deal, Judy Berry and Bruce Scott contributed several hours that Saturday to help the Commission with this publicity event. The day was a success and several new volunteers signed on.

On September 12, members of the Pine Mountain Survey took Joyce Bender and Kris Snyder on an unforgettable tour of Line Fork Cave in Kingdom Come State Park Nature Preserve in Letcher County. This experience thoroughly impressed the two by testing both their physical and mental limits. Afterwards, a cookout was held and a certificate given in recognition of the Michigan and Kentucky cavers and the work that they have accomplished at Line Fork Cave this summer. Thanks to the Kentucky Dept. of Parks for their cooperation and donations for this event. The cavers, Jeff Josefosky, Dave and Karen Schang, Dennis Uptegraft, Michael Warner, Dave and Penny Hibbard, Roger Welsh, Bruce Devore, Tammi Heazlet, Eva Rawson, Gordon Mapes, Claudia Schwab, Rick Kowalczyk and Bob Devers, have mapped almost 2 miles of passages and plan to return next spring to continue with their survey of this important cave. Their map work will benefit the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Indiana bat census scheduled for this winter. Locations of this federally endangered bat will be mapped more accurately now.

September 19 found the Stewardship staff doing one of the things they do best: eating! A volunteer appreciation

cookout was held at Raymond Athey Barrens State Nature Preserve in Logan County. Thanks to all those who attended the guided hike led by Joyce Bender and contributed such great food for the cookout. We especially want to thank John Higgins of Higgins Market, Tommy Gantz of Houchens #57 and Al Suhling of Foodland. These Russellville grocers contributed food, drinks and ice for the cookout.

Earlier that day, Elizabeth A. Rogers, Roland and Mary Frances Willock, Dave Blanpied, Mercy Perez, Grant Averill, Kim Cuza, Jeff Brooks, Ed and Tina Craft, Steve Grimes, Ned and Sandy Kearny, Rose Hullett, Steve and Kim Harlan, Marge Deller, Cathy Morris, Nydia Duran and Bonnie Ralston completed work on the new loop trail at Flat Rock Glade State Nature Preserve in Simpson County. These folks were so enthusiastic that we had a difficult time keeping them busy. Ragweed and trash removal were among the other tasks accomplished. A large thanks to those who filled in the gigantic hole at the preserve entrance. Stewardship trucks are especially appreciative. A very special thanks to preserve monitor, Ed Craft, for recruiting and organizing members of the Mammoth Cave Group of the Sierra Club for this outing.

Commission volunteers Tony Newman and Lana Appling assisted Cindy Campbell with the Commission exhibit at the Logan County Tobacco Festival in Russellville on October 10. Tony, Lana and Cindy talked to several people about the unique areas that the Commission protects within Logan County before the rain set in that afternoon. We appreciate Charles Page, Director of the Logan County Parks and Recreation, for loaning a display table for the day.

Volunteer Kate Chura survived her week on the road with Kris Snyder. Kate got involved with brush removal at Raymond Athey Barrens State Nature Preserve, boundary posting at Terrapin Creek State Nature Preserve in Graves County and preserve inspections at Axe Lake State Nature Preserve in Ballard County and Metropolis Lake State Preserve in McCracken County. Kris couldn't have accomplished as much in the same amount of time without her help.

Chris Hunsinger, Glenna Wood, Dave Hulefeld, Grant Averill and Greg Averill spent most of October 17 conducting light trail maintenance and dodging the trees that Kris kept pushing over at Vernon-Douglas State Nature Preserve in Hardin County. We especially enjoyed the camaraderie on this crisp and colorful fall day. Look for an upcoming workday to place signs on this newly completed 2.6 mile loop trail.

We welcome Tony Newman, Katrina Larsen, Stacy Williamson and Joey Roberts as new preserve monitors. They join Ed Craft, Tom Ress, and Mark Hamilton. We  
(CONTINUED)

**Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission  
Stewardship Volunteer Program  
Wish List**

**Hydrologist**

Needed to help us assess particular hydrological concerns on recent acquisitions.

**Amateur Birders**

Assist with the creation and maintenance of ornithological species lists for the nature preserve system.

**Preserve Monitors**

This job requires a highly dedicated and motivated individual who is willing to visit a preserve at least twice a month.  
We need preserve monitors at the following locations:

Axe Lake Swamp State Nature Preserve (Ballard Co.)  
Goodrum Cave State Nature Preserve (Allen Co.)  
Jesse Stuart State Nature Preserve (Greenup Co.)  
Metropolis Lake State Nature Preserve (McCracken Co.)  
Terrapin Creek State Nature Preserve (Graves Co.)  
Vernon-Douglas State Nature Preserve (Hardin Co.)

**Amateur Historian**

Research county records and interview long time residents to develop land use histories for the state nature preserves.

**Artist**

Design artwork for the covers of preserve brochures and a T-shirt Logo.

If you are interested in contributing any of the above skills or services to the Commission,  
please contact Cindy Campbell by calling (502) 564-2886.

---

**KENTUCKY STATE NATURE PRESERVES FUND**

The Commission's basic mandate is to inventory the Commonwealth for natural areas and to preserve those remnants by establishing a statewide nature preserve system. An important source of funding for protection and acquisition of natural areas comes from donations to the Commission. The beauty of Kentucky's landscape and wealth of plants and animals greeted early settlers. Today, Kentucky is home to over three million people. As we have settled the land and developed our cities, highways, and farmland, native plants and wildlife have retreated to the few wild places that still exist. These last vestiges of wilderness are all that remain of our natural heritage and must be protected now before they are lost to us forever.

Contributions to this fund will be used for the acquisition and protection of endangered species habitat and significant natural areas.

My contribution is \$\_\_\_\_\_.

I would like more information about the Kentucky's nature preserve system.\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form with your contribution or request for information to:

The Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission  
407 Broadway, Frankfort, KY 40601

## VOLUNTEERS CONTINUED...

also welcome Dale and Sharon Reichert. They join Bob and Ruth Matheny and Dan Danford as TNC preserve stewards on state dedicated nature preserves. Our greatest appreciation goes to this loyal group of folks who make our jobs a bit easier.

Brian Brown, an Eastern Kentucky University student, has donated his artistic skills to the Commission and is designing the covers of several new preserve brochures. Brian was an intern this summer with the Commission.

As this summer, abundant with sweat, bugs and noxious weeds, comes to a close, we look forward to a winter that is equally full of challenges, accomplishments and new friendships. If you are interested in becoming part of the team of volunteers that help us to make it all possible, contact Cindy Campbell at (502) 564-2886. Be sure to check your mail for the second issue of *Stewardship News and Views* in January.

## KENTUCKY'S RARE FLORA - THE ART OF STATUS ASSESSMENT

By Deborah White

The Kentucky State Nature Preserves Commission (KSNPC) is part of a nationwide network of programs that were set up to gather information on the elements of biodiversity such as flora, fauna and natural communities. One use of this information system has been to develop lists of the rare flora and fauna of the state by means of a species ranking process. These lists are then utilized in assessing issues that affect Kentucky's biodiversity and also to guide land protection efforts statewide.

The Kentucky flora is comprised of approximately 3200 different plants and of this total about 12% of the flora are thought to be rare. It is difficult to determine whether the paucity of information on a species is because it is truly rare or little work has been done on it. Recent work on the flora by Max Medley of the University of Louisville prompted a full review of the flora in addition to the periodic revisions to the state rare plant list. For this review we devised criteria based on methods used by all Heritage programs nationwide for measuring rarity and we applied these rules to the entire Kentucky flora. Every plant that is monitored by KSNPC has a unique combination of geographic, ecological and biological factors that contributes to its rarity and that are considered in assessing its status in the state.

As an example, take the case of wood lily (*Lilium philadelphicum*). This tall orange-flowered beauty is very showy and because it is so easily noticed, it is likely to be

reported. The primary cause for its decline is degradation of its open grass-dominated habitat due to development, collection by hobbyists, and fire suppression. Regular fire in these habitats inhibits the invasion of woody plants that would eventually shade out the lily. Wood lily is now known from eight scattered eastern counties, a high number compared to most rare plants. Although some occurrences are on public lands, most are found on unprotected roadsides and are made up of only a few plants. Despite its distribution, the vulnerability of most populations is a serious threat to the wood lily in Kentucky.

The overwhelming cause of rarity is the accelerated alteration of natural systems by humankind. Every rare plant has been detrimentally affected by the dramatic changes our natural landscape has undergone. But even prior to settlement some species were rare; biological factors also contribute to rarity and ultimately extinction. Limestone fameflower (*Talinum calcaricum*) was probably never common. It is so habitat specialized, occurring exclusively at the exposed rock interface in flat rock glades, that its full range extends only from around Bowling Green, Kentucky to Nashville, Tennessee.

Some plants, rather than habitat limited, are rare due to their own biological character. For instance, a plant that produces very few seeds per fruit or has a highly specialized pollination mechanism like some orchids, is not likely to be prolific. Canby's Mountain-lover (*Paxistima canbyi*), for instance, is a glacial relict now thought to be mostly sterile. It has a clonal growth habit, so a population of this species that appears to be several plants may actually be a single individual. The fifteen occurrences from scattered hilltops in Kentucky is likely only fifteen individual plants.

Another indirect affect of habitat fragmentation and degradation is disruption of pollinator relationships. The Kentucky rarity, royal catchfly (*Silene regia*), is a prairie plant that now occurs in remnant patchy populations. These small patches may no longer attract its primary pollinator, ruby-throated hummingbirds, in sufficient numbers to be effective in assisting with seed production.

Geologic and climatic history can explain the presence of some rare plants in Kentucky. *Acer spicatum* occurs in Kentucky as a relic of the Ice-age when the climate in Kentucky was much cooler. These temperate trees now persist near cave entrances and other habitats that simulate the cool conditions of forests that are now found much further north.

Many other plants that are on Kentucky's rare plant list are at the periphery of their natural range; they may be more common in other regions but just reach Kentucky. Because of geographic position, our state flora is influenced by the mid-western plains flora, by the Coastal Plain coming up through western Tennessee, by the Appalachian Mountains, and the northern temperate forests. (CONTINUED)

## KENTUCKY'S RARE FLORA CONTINUED

The difficulty in assessing the status of rare plants comes in reconstructing the story of each species with scanty botanical collection records and little information available on its biology. In each evaluation, we rely on our knowledge of general floristic patterns, plant systematics and natural community ecology, other botanists working on the Kentucky flora, as well as information exchanges with other Heritage programs. And, as more information on a species is discovered its status may change. Before Marc Evans started crawling underneath rhododendron thickets last summer, we thought kidney-leaf twayblade was endangered. He found several populations and we have changed the status to threatened. Other plants were removed from the list entirely; many others that had been overlooked were added. Each new KSNPC endeavor and other biological studies bring additional information to the on-going assessment of the status of our flora.

## STATE NATURE PRESERVE SYSTEM CONTINUES TO GROW

By Landon McKinney

Goodrum Cave State Nature Preserve was dedicated on August 12, 1992 (see KSNPC newsletter #5, April 1992). This extremely important gray bat maternity cave is the third rare bat cave in the state to be protected by the Commission.

Our state nature preserve system continues to grow with the recent acquisition and dedication of the first of several tracts of land that will be known as the Terrapin Creek State Nature Preserve. Terrapin Creek is Kentucky's largest tributary to the Obion River of northwest Tennessee. Although channeled, this crystal-clear, gravel-bottomed stream and the associated wetlands support a highly diverse and unique aquatic fauna. About one-third of the 37 native fish species known from the drainage are rare in Kentucky, six of which occur nowhere else in the state.

Our newest acquisition (our largest to date) was based on a joint effort between The Nature Conservancy, the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, and our agency. In

1991, Westvaco Corporation expressed an interest in selling their holdings surrounding Murphy's Pond in Hickman County. Murphy's Pond owned and managed by Murray State University has long been considered one of Kentucky's premiere wetlands. It lies at the very edge of the broad Obion Creek floodplain and is the best example of the few remaining bald cypress swamps left in the state. Westvaco property comprised approximately 2500 acres of marsh and bottomland hardwood communities. The Conservancy originally purchased this property earlier this year and by means of a cooperative effort, KSNPC acquired approximately 1400 acres of this vast wetland adjacent to Murphy's Pond to the south and west. KDFWR acquired the remaining acreage further west. This joint effort will help to insure that Murphy's Pond remains essentially intact and pristine. As well, the entire tract stands as the largest tract of protected wetland currently existing in Kentucky.

Kentucky State Nature Preserves  
Commission, 407 Broadway, Frank-  
fort, Kentucky 40601  
(502)564-2886



Nancy Osborne  
Legislative Research  
Commission  
Room 258, Capitol Annex  
**MESSENGER**

Bulk Rate  
US Postage  
PAID  
Frankfort, KY  
Permit #379



Printed with state funds on recycled paper.